

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /060 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/CAN:LFJANOWSKI:RM

APPROVED BY EUR:RDVINE

OES:HSPIELMAN (DRAFT)

L/EUR:SGUDGEON

EUR/CAN:JHROUSE,JR.

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O P 072216Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL WINNIPEG PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALGARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 168200

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CA

SUBJECT: POPLAR RIVER

REFS: A) STATE 124906; B) OTTAWA 1668; C) STATE 100294

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO RAISE THE POPLAR RIVER PROJECT WITH PREMIER BLAKENEY DURING YOUR CALL JULY 13 IN ORDER TO UNDERLINE HIGH LEVEL OF CONCERN IN US AND NEED FOR PROVINCE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THIS SENSITIVITY IF WE ARE TO AVOID ESCALATING AND POLITICIZING PROBLEM. PAST DISCUSSIONS HAVE RESULTED IN GOOD PROGRESS TOWARDS REACHING MUTUALLY AGREEABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF WATER USE AND TRANSBOUNDARY AIR QUALITY RELATED

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TO THE PROJECT, AND A BILATERAL IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 12 IN

WASHINGTON TO ADDRESS WATER QUALITY ISSUES. THE US OBJECTIVE IN THE JULY 12 MEETING IS TO OBTAIN GOC CONCURRENCE IN A US PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT REFERENCE OF WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS TO THE IJC IN LIEU OF A CANADIAN PROPOSAL FOR A BILATERAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION. DEPARTMENT WILL ADVISE YOU OF RESULTS OF MEETING BY PHONE BEFORE YOU SEE BLAKENEY.

2. WE SUGGEST YOU DRAW FROM THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH THE PREMIER:

--GOOD PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS REACHING MUTUALLY AGREEABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF WATER USE AND TRANSBOUNDARY AIR QUALITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROJECT.

--THE POSITIVE STEPS TAKEN BY THE SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL EQUIPMENT ON THE FIRST 300 MEGAWATT UNIT HAS BEEN A MAJOR FACTOR IN REDUCING PUBLIC REACTION IN THE US AND MINIMIZING GOVERNMENT PROBLEMS OVER THE AIR QUALITY ISSUE.

--LIKEWISE, THE IJC HAS MADE A COMMENDABLE EFFORT IN ADDRESSING THE APPORTIONMENT ISSUE, AND WE HOPE ITS FORTHCOMING RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS WILL LEAD TO A FORMAL APPORTIONMENT AGREEMENT WHICH WILL MEET THE LONG TERM INTERESTS OF BOTH PARTIES.

--TALKING POINTS TO BE INSERTED BASED ON OUTCOME OF JULY 12 MEETING.

--THE POPLAR RIVER PROJECT IS A MATTER OF DEEP CONCERN LOCALLY, PARTICULARLY AMONG AFFECTED INDIAN TRIBES AND OF SERIOUS POLITICAL CONCERN TO BOTH THE MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND TO THE MONTANA GOVERNMENT.

--THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE BELIEVES THAT CONTINUED EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THE CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS TO ADDRESS THE VARIOUS ISSUES IN AN ORDERLY AND TIMELY FASHION WILL HELP ASSURE THAT OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE POPLAR RIVER PROJECT ARE NOT POLITICIZED AND DO NOT
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BECOME AN ELECTION ISSUE IN THE STATES. A SEEMING FAILURE OF BILATERAL EFFORTS TO SHOW PROGRESS WOULD LIKELY RESULT IN PRESSURES FOR MORE POSITIVE AND DRAMATIC ACTION BY THE USG. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WATER POLLUTION, POPLAR RIVER, INTERNATIONAL RIVERS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BRIEFING MATERIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE168200
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LFJANOWSKI:RM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760262-0318
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760782/aaaacugi.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 124906, 76 OTTAWA 1668, 76 STATE 100294
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAY 2004 by chengls>; APPROVED <25 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POPLAR RIVER
TAGS: SENV, CA, US, (ENDERS, THOMAS O), (BLAKENEY, A E)
To: OTTAWA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006